

Plagiarism: Don't Do It.

1. Let's first assess what you already know:

Take a look at the following paragraph taken from the NASA website (www1.nasa.gov/mission_pages/apollo/index.html) in an article titled, "The Apollo Story". Which of the answers below would be examples of plagiarizing this site? (Select all that apply.)

"It all started on May 25, 1961, when President John F. Kennedy announced the goal of sending astronauts to the moon before the end of the decade. Coming just three weeks after Mercury astronaut Alan Shepard became the first American in space, Kennedy's bold challenge set the nation on a journey unlike any before in human history."

- ☐ It all started on May 25, 1961, when President John F. Kennedy announced a goal of sending astronauts to the moon.
- ☐ Alan Shepard was the first American in space.
- ☐ Three weeks after Alan Shepard became the first American in space, President Kennedy set the nation on a journey unlike any other in history.
- ☐ On May 25, 1961, President John F. Kennedy announced a goal to send astronauts to the moon before the end of the decade.

2. Introduction to Plagiarism

Chris just found some good stuff on the Web for his science report about sharks. He highlights a paragraph that explains that most sharks grow to be only 3 to 4 feet long and can't hurt people. Chris copies it and pastes it into his report. He quickly changes the font so it matches the rest of the report and continues his research.

Uh-oh. Chris just made a big mistake. Do you know what he did? He committed plagiarism (say: play-juh-rih-zem). Plagiarism is when you use someone else's words or ideas and pass them off as your own. It's not allowed in school, college, or beyond, so it's a good idea to learn the proper way to use resources, such as websites, books, and magazines.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating, but it's a little complicated so a kid might do it without understanding that it's wrong. Chris should have given the author and the website credit for the information. Why? Because Chris didn't know this information before he came to the website. These aren't his thoughts or ideas.

3. Plagiarism Steals Ideas

The word plagiarism comes from a Latin word for "kidnapping". You know that kidnapping is stealing a person. Well, plagiarism is stealing a person's ideas or writing. You wouldn't take someone's lunch money or bike, right? Well, someone's words and thoughts are personal property, too.

4. Be careful about what and how you borrow information from other sources!

Assess what you already know:

The meaning of "Plagiarism" is limited to "using other people's words".

True False (circle your answer)

5. List of specific items you MUST give credit for when included in your paper—otherwise you are **PLAGIARIZING**:



Statistical data



Charts



Tables



Most dates (unless it's 'common knowledge' such as, "Independence Day takes place on July 4th")



Graphics



People's opinions



Any other information that is not "common knowledge"

6. **"Common Knowledge"** (defined) = information that can be found in a number of places and is known by lots of people. For example, "George Washington was the first president of the United States."

7. How "serious" is plagiarism?

Assess what you already know:

Even though plagiarism is a serious offense, it is not against the law.

True False (circle your answer)

8. Research: "busy work" or worthwhile?

Many kids don't think plagiarism is a big deal. They may see research as "busy work" and don't necessarily see the value in it. You should know, however, that the skills you learn from writing papers, researching and analyzing information are valuable skills to have—for the rest of your life. Plagiarism is a crime, and can have serious consequences

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9. Possible Consequences of Plagiarism:



Fail the assignment



Fail the class



Get expelled from school



Lose degrees and honors



Get fired from a job



Get sued



Ruin your credibility

10. Don't procrastinate!

Procrastination can be a huge factor in plagiarism. With all of their outside activities and other interests, many students wait until the last minute to write their paper. It can make you feel overwhelmed and rushed, which can cause them to take careless notes and to plagiarize, even if they don't mean to. They can also feel pressure from parents and teachers to make good grades.

11. "Unintentional Plagiarism" is still plagiarism.

Unintentional plagiarism often occurs when students forget that they copied a phrase, or when they failed to note a source in their Works Cited page. Good habits will help you avoid unintentional plagiarism.

12. Good Habits:



Plan your assignments carefully.



Get started right away.



Create an outline for your paper.



Take good notes



Put quotation marks around anything that's directly taken from another source.



Mark paraphrases so you don't get them confused with your own ideas.



Give credit to all of your sources.

13. Giving "credit" doesn't mean assigning grade points—and "citing" doesn't mean issuing a parking ticket. 😊

Basically, when you "credit" or "cite" a source, you are recognizing the source of the information. Many students hesitate to use too many citations for fear that they won't seem original. It's important that you realize the more you can back up your thoughts with sources, the more valid your points will be.

14. To avoid having to look up things again later, keep track of the following information when you're researching and taking notes. You'll need this information later when you're asked to formally "cite" a source anyway.

- ✓ Author's name (First, last and middle, if given)
- ✓ Title of the work (website or page title, article title, book title, chapter title, etc.—all that apply!)
- ✓ Name and location of publisher
- ✓ Publication date
- ✓ Pages you found the information (many web sources will not provide these)
- ✓ Web address to the online source (<http://www> . . .)
- ✓ Date you first accessed the online source.

15. So what needs to be cited, and what doesn't?

Assess what you already know:

A student is studying global warming. She has been assigned to write a paper that either supports or argues the causes for global warming. She comes to you for help in figuring out which sources she will need to credit. **Which of the following sources should she give credit to by citing their information if she uses it in their paper? (Select all that apply)**

- ☐ An article found on the internet that has no author listed
- ☐ A blog from a global warming Web site, where the only name available is the blogger's online user name.
- ☐ A discussion she had with her father, who works for a power-generation facility.
- ☐ A friend who gave her his open opinion about global warming.
- ☐ A paraphrase of what one of her teachers said in class last week.

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16. Avoid plagiarism by citing thing such as:

- ✓ Other people's ideas, opinions, or theories.
- ✓ Anything that is not common knowledge, including facts or statistics of any kind.
- ✓ Someone else's written or spoken words, including interviews.
- ✓ Paraphrasing of another person's spoken or written words.
- ✓ Someone else's work that's referenced to support your ideas.

Citing sources is KEY to avoid plagiarism!

17. So, how do you properly include the citation within the paper?

One of the most popular ways is to include the author's name and the page number where the information appears, in parenthesis, and to place it right after the information being cited. But there are a variety of situations and each situation has its own required format. Here are a few:

★ Citing sources that have an author's last name + page number (if applicable): **most popular*

Here's an example of how that would appear in your document:

Our school system has one of the most progressive curriculums in the nation (Maverrick 32). ←*notice the period comes after the parenthesis; NO commas between the last name or page number.*

(last name page number).

★ Citing a source that has an author but does NOT have page numbers:

Some sources (especially online) will provide an author's name but will not contain page numbers. In these instances, just put the author's last name in the parenthesis (Maverrick).

(last name).

★ Citing online sources without an author's last name:

For online sources without an author's name, simply put an abbreviated version of the title. An article, for example, would be: ("Top Schools" 170). Remember to properly punctuate by using quotation marks around the titles of articles, and *italicizing* the titles of books.

("Title of article" page number). ←when a page number IS given.

("Title of article"). ←when a page number IS NOT given.

18. What about the other citation information you kept track of?

All of the other information you kept track of (such as the book publisher and publication date, or the date you accessed the website, or the URL address) will appear on a bibliography page, known as a Works Cited Page.

19. What is a Works Cited Page?

Also known as a "Bibliography", a Works Cited page is kind of like the "credits" you see scrolling at the end of a movie. A Works Cited page is simply a page that contains a list of the resources that were used to help you write your paper. This list provides all bibliographic information available about each source, and is formatted in a specific way. We're going to be using M.L.A. formatting. There are two purposes of a Works Cited page: 1) It shows respect and gives credit to the information's originator (thus, avoiding plagiarism for the writer) and 2) allows the reader of your paper to find the exact source, title, article, web site and/or page number you used to verify your research.

20. How will I create a Works Cited Page?

There are many different online tools and applications to make Works Cited pages *really easy*, such as www.easybib.com. It can just-as-easily become confusing, however, if you did not do a good enough job keeping track of your citation information, and if you didn't keep that information organized for yourself (**Refer back to #12.**).

21. How do I paraphrase what I'm reading so that I don't copy & paste someone else's words, and to avoid committing plagiarism?

Simply changing a few words here and there is not enough. If the idea wasn't yours, you shouldn't take credit for it.

Step #1. Read the material you want to include in your paper.

Step #2. Now, without looking at the text, write the ideas down in your own words.

Step #3. Be careful to later compare what you have written to the original and make sure you didn't accidentally use the same phrases, or that you didn't accidentally change the meaning of what you were trying to say.

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22. Can you identify a good example of proper paraphrasing?

Try to identify the best paraphrase for the following quote from an article by Kathrine Hobson titled "How to Protect a Teen Athlete From Sports Injury" that was posted on a USNews.com Web site: <http://health.usnews.com/articles/health/brain-and-behavior/2008/12/10/how-to-protect-a-teen-athlete-from-sports-injury.htm>.

"Sports injuries fall into two categories. Acute injuries, like a sprained ankle or torn ACL in the knee, occur suddenly, after a missed step or a midfield collision. Overuse injuries are caused by repetitive motion that damages the body over time."

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- ☐ Sports injuries fall into two categories. Acute injuries, like a sprained ankle or torn ACL in the knee, occur suddenly, after a missed step or a midfield collision. Overuse injuries are caused by repetitive motion that damages the body over time.
- ☐ There are two types of sports injuries: Acute and Overuse. Acute injuries happen suddenly when an athlete moves or bangs a part of his body the wrong way and are usually sudden and accidentally. Acute injuries include sprains and torn ligaments or muscles. Overuse injuries happen over a long period of time when an athlete moves his limb constantly in the same way.

23. My teachers won't catch me... *will they?*

Are you really willing to risk it?! (Refer back to #9 and #11.)

Just as the internet and other technologies have made it 'easier' for plagiarism and cheating to occur, they've also made it easier for teachers and parents to catch. There are countless tools and applications that teachers can use to verify the authenticity of your work.

24. Closing thoughts...

So, remember to refer to these tips, as well as the Anti-Plagiarism Checklist from <http://kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/school/plagiarism.html> and you should be (grade) "A"-ok!



25. Learning everything you can about plagiarism is key to avoiding it!!

The best ways to avoid plagiarism is to:

Step #1. Plan—don't procrastinate.

Step #2. Take proper notes by summarizing, paraphrasing and directly quoting.

Step #3. CITE in your writing.



An Anti-Plagiarism Checklist

- ☐ Did I make a list of all the books, articles, websites, and other sources I used?
- ☐ Did I keep track of which information came from which sources?
- ☐ When I used sentences just as they were in the source, did I always put quotation marks around them?
- ☐ When I summarized ideas in my own words, did I remember to give credit to the original source?
- ☐ Did I ask my teacher if I was unsure of how to list a source or whether to list it?